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The office of the AMERICAN ART NEWS is now prepared to procure for patrons and readers expert opinion at a nominal rate on pictures or art objects, to attend to the buying, restoration, framing, cleaning and varnishing of pictures, and to repair art objects, at reasonable rates.

In the interest of our readers, and in order to facilitate business, we are prepared to publish in our advertising columns, special notices of pictures and other art works, with reference to the individual desire of any owner or buyer to sell or purchase any particular example.

Should any of our readers desire any special information on art matters of any kind, we shall be glad to put our sources of information at their service.

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AMERICAN TASTE LIMITED?

Dr. Bode of Berlin is now engaged in adversely criticising American collectors and our art public in the Munich art journal "Der Cicerone"—possibly as a small back fire to divert attention from the now generally believed error he committed in attributing to Da Vinci the wax bust, presumably fashioned by the modern English sculptor Lucas, and purchasing the same for the Koenig Friedrich Museum. It must, we fear, be admitted that the learned Doctor argues against the taste and practice of wealthy American art buyers with some reason, and builds his argument upon good grounds. He says in part:

"Single portraits or works of Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Cuyp or Ruisdael fetch \$250,000, six times what they brought a few years ago. Half a million dollars is paid for a Velasquez. These prices make European museums unable to compete with the buyers from America. "But there is a wide field in the

collection of great art for which American buyers have yet made no demand and recently we have been attending to this section."

"Americans," he continues, "want big names. Rembrandt, Vermeer, Botticelli, Titian and so on will entice them into any folly. But even pictures by these masters must be fine, large specimens and of attractive subjects.

"American dealers consider small sketches even by the greatest masters as unsalable. We European collectors must profit by this lack of American appreciation as long as we can." He concludes:

"Americans are apt to measure the value of pictures by their size."

These are the main facts that Dr. Bode puts into words. We buy and collect too much on names and not enough on quality. But will there be and can there be any change and improvement in these conditions in an already over-commercialized country and one whose commercialism grows all the time?

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM.

Among the many recent accessions to the Metropolitan Museum the most important in the classical department is a crouching Venus, a replica of the well-known type, of which the most famous copy is in the Louvre.

A Greek lion, V century B.C., a fragmentary statue of a Seated Philosopher, inscribed with the name of the sculptor Zeuxis, and a Roman portrait bust of the early Imperial period, are the larger marbles. In the purchase of the lion and the Venus generous contributions were made by Mr. James Loeb and an anonymous friend of the Museum.

The Boscovale frescoes have been rearranged and may now be seen to great advantage. A small room has been built, just large enough to contain the frescoes of the Cubiculum, and in the center of the room now stands Mr. Pierpont Morgan's famous bronze Eros.

An important XV century work of Florentine art is a polychrome relief by Andrea Verrochio, representing the Virgin and Child.

"An Opalescent River—Deerfield Valley," by Gardner Symons, which won the Carnegie Prize at the last Academy, is the gift of Mr. Emerson McMillin; "The Old Mill," by Theodore Robinson, is the gift of Mrs. Robert W. Chambers; "Adam and Eve, School of Mabuse," is given by Mrs. Stanford White, and "Saint and Cherubs," by Albani, is a gift from Mrs. Russell Sage.

Two gifts not yet placed on exhibition are an altarpiece, given by the late Mr. William M. Laffan, and a marble group of "Pygmalion and Galatea," by Auguste Rodin, given by Mr. Thomas F. Ryan, in memory of Mr. Laffan.

The fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Museum will be celebrated in connection with the annual meeting of members, on Feb. 21, at 4 P. M. Mr. Joseph H. Choate, the only surviving founder, will deliver the oration.

The exhibition of the works of the late James McNeill Whistler will be opened at the Museum about March 15. This exhibition is being arranged with the approval of Miss Rosalind Birnie-Philips, the executrix of Mr. Whistler, and with the active co-operation of Mr. Charles L. Freer, of Detroit, who has promised to lend several pictures from his collection. Other collectors who have also promised pictures are Mr. Samuel Untermyer, Mr. John H. Whittemore, Mr. Richard A. Canfield, Col. F. J. Hecker and Mr. John G. Johnson. The famous Venetian pastels will also be shown.

PHILADELPHIA.

Exhibitions:
Academy of the Fine Arts—105th annual exhibition to March 20th.
Art Club—Pastels by Charles Henry Fromuth.
McClellan's Gallery—Paintings by Grace G. Wiederseim.
R. M. Lindsay Gallery—Works by living American painters.

The galleries at the Academy were packed last Sunday and 4,300 people registered for that day. During the three weeks it has been open the attendance has numbered 30,000.

A special meeting was held last Tuesday evening at the Academy, in honor of the birthday of Richard Watson Gilder, who was born February 8, 1844. Behind the speakers' platform hung the portrait of Mr. Gilder by Cecilia Beaux, and at the side was a bookcase containing some volumes of his publications. Dr. Horace Howard Furness presided. An original poem was read by Mrs. Florence Earle Coates, Dr. Talcott Williams gave an eloquent tribute to the poet's memory, and Dr. S. Weir Mitchell wrote a paper, which was read by his son, on reminiscences of Mr. Gilder as friend and publisher.

Charles Henry Fromuth, who was born in Philadelphia, but has been living abroad for twenty-five years, has a large showing of his work, over a hundred numbers, at the Art Club here. They are presented by the Folsom Galleries of New York, and are sent from Concarneau, Finisterre, France. The exhibition will open on Monday.

The School of Industrial Art, under the auspices of the Alumni Association, is holding an Exhibition of Photographs by E. Goldensky and R. T. Dooner, associates. The exhibition will continue through Feb. 28. Tea will be served every afternoon.

The Philadelphia Art Galleries will hold an auction sale of the paintings and statuary belonging to the late Joseph Harrison, Jr., Feb. 23-25, at 3 P. M. each day. Mr. Harrison made his collection of works by early American painters, and other foreign work, when it was a unique thing to do, and he ranked very high, at that time, as a collector.

SALMAGUNDI AUCTION.

The goodly amount of \$104,246.13 was realized from the two-night auction sale of 12x12 unframed pictures at the Salmagundi Club last week. Nearly two hundred pictures were sold. The highest figure, \$232, was paid by Mr. Samuel T. Shaw for Paul Cornoyer's "Winter Day—Fifth Avenue." Albert Groll's "After Rain—Arizona" brought \$150; Luis Mora's "In Spanish Costume" \$190; William Ritschel's "Kelp Gatherers" \$120. A club member who wishes to remain anonymous was the first-night auctioneer, and Luis Mora held the hammer the second night. There was a large attendance each evening, much interest and many bargains. Last year's total for about the same number of pictures was \$500 less.

OBITUARY.

John Macallan Swan.

John Macallan Swan, the noted animal painter, died in London Tuesday last, aged 63. He studied at the Worcester, England, School of Art and in Paris under Dagnan-Bouveret, Gerôme and Bastien-Lepage and Fremiet the sculptor.

Julius Gerson.

Julius Gerson, father of Mrs. William M. Chase, died at the Polyclinic Hospital on Tuesday, aged 85. He was an able designer. Three daughters, Mrs. Chase and the Misses Minnie and Virginia Gerson, survive him.

RANGER AT TOOTH'S.

Ten recent landscapes, marines and coast scenes by Henry W. Ranger are now on view at the Tooth galleries, No. 580 Fifth Ave. The able brush of the painter has not been idle of late and he shows in these canvasses increased vigor of technique, a deeper and richer color palette and an atmospheric quality that are an advance even on his former good work. The most important example is "Autumn—Mason's Island," a large and compelling canvas, a Diaz in subject, composition, color and the painting of glints of light on tree trunks. There are lovely and truthful blues and fine air and light in the Noank Harbor views, lovely distance and beautiful sky in "Long Point Marsh," fine distance and rich color in "Mystic Valley from Lord's Hill," deep and splendid color and great virility in "East End—Fisher's Island" and delicate color and alluring atmosphere in "New York from Weehawken Heights." A strong display by an unusually well equipped man.

DRAWINGS BY OLD MASTERS.

The selection of 42 drawings by Old Masters from the Duke of Rutland's collection, shown at the E. Gimpel and Wildenstein Galleries, No. 636 Fifth Avenue through Mar. 5, is unique of its kind, and contains some specimens of the work in pen, lead pencil, pen with watercolor, chalks, crayon and bister, of such great men as Botticelli, Carracci, Murillo, Parmigiano, Pordenone, Raphael, Rembrandt, Rubens, Titian and Da Vinci that will greatly interest and excite lovers and collectors of black and white and even picture collectors and connoisseurs.

The drawings have evidently been selected with rare knowledge and discrimination, and the little display is rarely important and interesting. Here are a pen sepia and blue pencil drawing by Barocci of "Christ and St. Magdalen"; a pen and watercolor sketch by Botticelli, "Young Florentine"; a pen and sepia by Carracci, "Holy Family," and a pencil sepia and watercolor by Cortona that will make collectors envious.

A Guercino, "David and Goliath"; three red chalks by Raphael, and a pen with sepia and crayon, "Christ and the Two Apostles," by Rembrandt, are very choice and delightful, while a pen and watercolor study by Titian for his "Virgin with Babbit," in the Louvre, is exceptionally good and important.

There are two black-lead drawings by Murillo, and no less than ten in chalks and pen by Parmigiana.

BEAUX ARTS FESTIVITY.

The Société d'Ecole des Beaux Arts gave its annual costume dinner and dance in its rooms in the Fine Arts building on Tuesday evening. There were eighteen tables at dinner, and 150 members and guests, all in costume. The dinner was followed by an amusing skit, "Revue de l'An 1909," in which appeared Messrs. Kenneth Murchison, Donn Barber, Henry Hornbostel, Glacier and Ware. The sensation of the evening was the impersonation of Mary Garden by George Chappell. A dance followed the farce.

The annual exhibition of oils at the Salmagundi Club will be held from February 25 to March 12.

Taber Sears will hold an exhibition of Bermuda and European pictures, principally Venice and Spain, in March at the Wunderly Galleries in Pittsburg.